

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 09809 262117Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----116815 262120Z /61
O 262040Z NOV 77 ZFF4
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9559
WHITE HOUSE NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 9809

EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS CHEROKEE

WHITE HOUSE FOR BRZEZINSKI

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGO, IS, EG, US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH BEGIN

REF: (A) STATE 282029; (B) STATE 283133; (C) STATE 283148

1. PRIME MINISTER BEGIN WAS ALONE FOR MEETING AT 1800 TODAY AT HIS HOUSE. WE OUTNUMBERED HIM, SINCE VIETS AND BRUBECK WERE WITH ME. HE WAS IN HIGH GOOD SPIRITS, FULL OF ENERGY AND, IN WIDE RANGING CONVERSATION, STILL REMINISCING ABOUT THE WEEKEND THAT WAS. THE GLOW LINGERS, IF ANYTHING WARMER AFTER PASSAGE OF A WEEK; AFTERMATH MAKES HIM MORE THAN EVER CONVINCED OF SUCCESS OF THE VISIT AND HIS HANDLING OF IT. FONMIN HAD GIVEN HIM THE GIST OF SADAT'S SPEECH TODAY AND HE CONSIDRED THE CAIRO CONFERENCE PROPOSAL, OF COURSE, AS THE "OPERATIVE PART" OF THE SPEECH. HE HAD CONSULTED ALREADY BY PHONE WITH DAYAN AND YADIN, WAS CONSULTING AT 1930 WITH "SEVEN COLLEAGUES" (PRESUMABLY CABINET COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS), FOLLOWING MY MEETING WITH HIM, AND WILL REPORT TO CABINET TOMORROW.

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HIS SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO ME, HE MADE CLEAR, WERE PROVISIONAL PENDING CONSIDERATION IN THE 1930 MEETING. (FOLLOWING THAT MEETING, HE PHONED ME WITH DEFINITIVE RESPONSE AS DETAILED BELOW.)

2. AT OUTSET OF OUR MEETING, HE READ THROUGH PRESIDENT CARTER'S LETTER (REF. A) AND REACTED VERY POSITIVELY

(AND DID AGAIN IN OUR SUBSEQUENT PHONE CONVERSATION).
HE FOUND IT A "BEAUTIFUL LETTER," "WARM AND WONDERFUL,"
AND ASKED ME TO THANK PRESIDENT CARTER FOR IT.

3. BEGIN PHONED AT 2030 WITH CABINET COMMITTEE'S
DEFINITIVE RESPONSE TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS WHICH HE
ASKS WE PASS TO SADAT. A) DAYAN WOULD PREFER TO MEET
IN MOROCCO, NOT ROMANIA, SINCE PRIVACY CAN BE SO WELL
MAINTAINED IN MOROCCO. HE IS AVAILABLE ANY DAY FROM
DEC. 1 ON (FOLLOWING NOV. 27-30 TRIP TO GERMANY).
(BEGIN CLEARLY EXPECTS SADAT TO SET SPECIFIC DATE.)
B) WEIZMAN IS EAGER TO MEET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
AFTER RECOVERING FROM HIS ACCIDENT. HOWEVER, ON
DOCTOR'S ORDERS, CANNOT TRAVEL FOR THREE WEEKS. IN
MEANTIME, HE PLANS SEND PERSONAL LETTER TO GAMASY
THROUGH US TO KEEP UP MOMENTUM. LETTER WILL ALSO
SEEK CLARIFICATION ABOUT SOME AMBIGUOUS INTELLIGENCE
ISRAELIS GETTING ON PRESENT MILITARY SITUATION. C)
ISRAELIS IN FAVOR OF IDEA OF HAVING AN ISRAELI
DIPLOMAT IN U.S. EMBASSY CAIRO BUT UNDERSTAND THAT
WE NEED TO GIVE FURTHER THOUGHT TO DETAILS AND TO
POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES. BEGIN ASKS, IN ADDITION, THAT WE
RENEW WITH SADAT PROPOSAL BEGIN MADE HERE (TO
WHICH SADAT MADE NO RESPONSE PRO OR CON) FOR A DIRECT
PHONE LINK BETWEEN THE TWO ("HOME TO HOME, JUST FOR
VERY IMPORTANT MATTERS.") (I SUGGEST DEPARTMENT COME
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UP WITH SOME SPECIFICS ABOUT HOW WE MIGHT HELP, IF
SADAT IS AGREEABLE. BEGIN HAS NOT SPECIFIED SECURE
PHONE BUT I ASSUME BOTH PRINCIPALS WOULD PREFER. I
UNDERSTAND THIS IS POSSIBLE THROUGH RADIO LINK.
DEPARTMENT MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER LAND LINE CONNECTION
VIA SFM. WE NOW HAVE DIRECT DIALING TO SFM ON TEL
AVIV SWITCHBOARD; DO NOT KNOW WHAT CAPABILITY SFM
HAS TO CAIRO. HOWEVER SUCH A LINK MIGHT BE LESS
VISIBLE THAN DIRECT LINK THROUGH REGULAR COMMERCIAL
CHANNELS.)

3. DEPARTMENT WILL HAVE SEEN STATEMENT GOI NOW ISSUING
AFTER TONIGHTS'S MEETING WHICH IS PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE OF
SADAT'S PUBLIC PROPOSAL FOR "CAIRO TALKS" (CAREFULLY
NOT FURTHER CHARACTERIZED BY GOI). GOI ALSO BEING
CAREFUL IN STATEMENT TO AWAIT OFFICIAL INVITE BEFORE
DESIGNATING REPRESENTATIVE; AND TO MAKE CLEAR THEY
RETAIN THEIR OWN POSITION ON ISSUES, DESPITE SADAT
SPEECH TODAY.

4 ABOVE DECISIONS CONFIRM WITHOUT SIGNIFICANT CHANGE
WHAT BEGIN HAD TOLD ME IN EARLIER MEETING (INTERESTING

FURTHER EVIDENCE OF HIS DOMINANCE OF CABINET). ONLY CHANGE WAS THAT IN EARLIER CONVERSATION WITH ME, BEGIN HAD INDICATED PREFERENCE THAT DAYAN AND TOHAMI MEET IN ROMANIA, PERMITTING DAYAN USE OF "OFFICIAL VISIT" COVER WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (UNLESS, HE SAID, "DAYAN PREFERS MOROCCO.") HE HAD OBSERVED THAT ROMANIANS "HAVE MADE AN INVESTMENT" IN USE OF THEIR CHANNEL AND IT WOULD BE NICE TO EMPLY BUCHAREST FOR THIS REASON. BESIDES, HE THOUGHT FOR WEISMAN TO GO TO ROMANIA WOULD BE SO OBVIOUSLY AN ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN MEETING AS TO BE DIFFICULT TO CONCEAL. RE WEIZMAN-GAMASY TALKS, ISRAELIS AGREEABLE TO ANY LOCALE INCLUDING CAIRO. I TOLD HIM I THOUGH GOE MIGHT PREFER SOMETHING LESS CONSPICUOUS IF MEETING WERE
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IN EGYPT, SUCH AS APPROPRIATE HOUSE ALONG THE CANAL. SUGGEST THAT SADAT PROPOSE PLACE AND PERHAPS A SPECIFIC DATE AFTER DECEMBER 17 (POINT AT WHICH DOCTORS NOW SAY WEIZMAN CAN TRAVEL).

5. I SHOULD NOTE THAT BEGIN'S ACCEPTANCE OF SADAT'S CAIRO MEETING PROPOSAL CAME AFTER I HAD TRANSMITTED SADAT'S ASSURANCE THAT HIS PROPOSAL DID NOT PREJUDICE OR ALTER ARRANGEMENTS FOR BILATERAL GOE-GOI TALKS AGREED TO LAST WEEKEND. I ALSO EXPLAINED OUR VIEW OF THE PROPOSAL (REFTEL C) AND THAT WE DID NOT SEE THIS AS SUBSTITUTE FOR, BUT RATHER STEP TOWARD, GENEVA CONFERENCE, AND TOLD HIM WHAT WE WERE SAYING TO PRESS. DETAILS ON THESE AND OTHER ASPECTS OF CONVERSATION BEING REPORTED SEPTEL.
LEWIS

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